



PROMISING PRACTICE

Partnerships and Employment Strategies

Health Careers Northwest at Worksystems, Inc.

Portland, OR

Partnerships pave the way to prosperity.



The strength of Health Careers Northwest (HCNW) lies in the strategy to forge meaningful partnerships in the Portland Metro region.

Health Careers Northwest is a WorkSource Portland Metro program financed with funds awarded to Worksystems, Inc., through the Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG). HCNW provides coaching, training, and job placement support to low-income adults interested in healthcare. A strong partnership with the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) and their Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) clients has led to high program enrollment and completion. Thanks to this approach, TANF recipients are succeeding at the same high rate as all HCNW clients.

HCNW's partnership strategy focuses on supporting DHS staff. HCNW Career Coaches and DHS Family Coaches often can offer the same support services to participants. The coaches synchronize as many support services as possible, allowing their client to maintain stability during healthcare training and through employment.

HCNW Career Coaches and other support staff are mobile. They host information sessions at DHS branches, meet with customers at DHS offices, and attend DHS-led trainings. The TANF clients are familiar

with the DHS offices and staff. Meeting participants in a comfortable environment helps develop a trusting relationship with the HCNW coach. Having the DHS staff present during initial meetings is also key in the successful building of the coach-client relationship.

Ongoing coordination with the WorkSource system has been a key component in the success of HCNW. WorkSource liaisons facilitate communication and resources between all the programs offered by WorkSource in the Portland Metro Region. The liaisons identify hazards in participants' paths and work with coaches, other staff, and management to address them. They provide an open forum to brainstorm solutions for participants across organizations in the HCNW network and beyond.

The partnership between HCNW and Oregon DHS produced amazing results. In two years, 215 TANF recipients enrolled into the treatment group—over 50 percent of the program's five-year goal. They look forward to continuing this strong relationship and surpassing even more goals.

“Health Careers NW staff coordinate well with our Family Coaches to provide wrap-around services and support to DHS customers. The result has been that customers are excited to engage in services that are person-to-person, accessible and collaborative,” says Tau Cha, DHS Senior Operations Manager for Self Sufficiency.

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